Abstract of the Disclosure

A relational database has a data file stored separately from a representation of the schema of the relational data in the data file. Schema representation files of several different types are generated by compiling a human-readable script defining the schema. One of the schema files is linked to its corresponding data file by a pointer, so that an application program invoking a database engine can find the schema for processing the data file. Another type of schema file can be included in an application program, so that the application can process the data file via the database engine without accessing any other schema information.